6: Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

176 648 aggressive policy, or against any other State which might revive this policy, under any form whatsoever.

Backed both without and within by the might of Moscow, Tito's régime seemed to be irresistibly established.

Its[1] first care had been to renew its claim to the territories of which Yugoslavia had been defrauded immediately after the First World War. It raised the question of Trieste and its hinterland. The Yugoslav delegation in London warmly defended a case supported by detailed and absolutely pertinent documentation, based on ethnographic and economic considerations. But they were imprudent enough to allow it to be understood that they would lay claim to Aegean or Hellenic Macedonia—which was bound to alienate the goodwill of Great Britain. They also mentioned the exorbitant sum which they intended to demand from Italy by way of reparations—thereby upsetting the United States, from whom Italy was at the same time seeking material aid to help her out of her desperate financial situation.

642 661 175 Yet, to tell the truth, the distrustful atmosphere which grew up around the Yugoslav claims arose more directly from the form of government and the political principles established by Tito. Under colour of anti-Fascism, the régime exercised the same reprisals against all its detractors. It was accused of borrowing the methods of the totalitarian régimes; the Opposition said that it had introduced the word 'Democracy' into the name of the State in order to dispense with it in reality, as, in the past, Pavelich gave the name of 'Independent State of Croatia' to a political offshoot of the Axis. He governed, on Russian lines, a very sensitive nation, which perhaps had not a very 'Western' notion of democracy, but had always shown itself stubbornly attached to the external forms of its independence. Certainly Tito had succeeded in grouping around him zealous young men, who had been tested under fire and were indifferent to the juridical or constitutional rites which, in the West, accompany the exercise of liberty. Certainly, too, the Yugoslav National Front represented itself not as a single party but as a synthesis of all the various energies resolved to work for the restoration of public life.

656 204 •625 Nevertheless to Anglo-American eyes the régime appeared to be a dictatorship. Was not its slogan—'No liberty for the enemies of liberty'—calculated to justify an administration

1 [Tito's régimes -- Analyst]

6: Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

founded on despotism and personal power? The law of August 25, 1945 on the control of the press banned not only the ex-'collaborators', but also the publishers of 'alarmist' news or of news 'contrary to the general interest'—as conceived by the Government, naturally. A well-informed police organisation, modelled on Russian methods, ceaselessly exercised a very close watch over public opinion and, naturally, indulged in arbitrary arrests and acts of violence.

This policy led to dissension within the Government. The leader of the Serbian Democratic Party, Milan Grol, resigned on August 19[1]; on October 8[1] he was followed into retirement by Dr. Ivan Choubachich and the Minister Choutei, both Croat Agrarians.

Choubachich's resignation was serious, for it upset a ministerial equilibrium which had been agreed upon among the Allies. Yet what was this agreement worth, since Tito, repudiating the terms of the compromise which had sanctioned his authority, had pronounced against the monarchy? 'Not one of our combatants thought that anything new could be created under the leadership of the King, especially as the Nediches and Mihailoviches committed their crimes in his name. . . . The point is, whether the monarchy is compatible with the new system of Yugoslav Federal Democracy. . . . For several reasons, I think it is not'.

The next day (August 8, 1945) King Peter replied to this declaration by withdrawing from the Regents the power they held from him.

Tito was not intimidated by this retort. He declared that the Government acted in agreement with all the creative and constructive forces of the country, with all sincerely democratic parties. The masses of the populace had acquired, during the war, firmly-rooted political knowledge which had nothing in common with the electoral catchwords with which they previously used to be taken in.

The Opposition replied that free elections would prove the truth of this assertion, whereas those to which the country had been called were not free. The Americans and the English repeatedly emphasised the reserves they made regarding their attitude towards the régime which would result from this poll.

The elections took place on November 11.[1] They gave to the

1 [1945- : Analyst]